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COUNCILMEMBER CACHOLA CALLS FOR DETAILED STUDY OF PROPOSED SYNAGRO FACILITY

(HONOLULU)—Councilmember Romy M. Cachola has called for a more detailed study of Synagro's proposed sludge processing facility at Sand Island after reports of a silo filled with 650 tons of dried fertilizer pellets exploded last Friday in The Bronx, New York. The blast sent an unpleasant wave of burnt fecal odor into communities within a two-mile area.

New York Organic Fertilizer Company, which contracts with New York City to transform material from waste-water treatment plants into dried pellets which are sold to farmers as fertilizer, is affiliated with Synagro. Similar explosions and malfunctions have also occurred at Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Ontario, Canada; and other jurisdictions that use similar technology.

"We cannot afford to put the public's health and safety in harm's way," Councilmember Cachola said. "That is why I have called for a full Environmental Impact Statement. Malfunctions at Synagro's proposed facility would disrupt businesses at Sand Island, Kalihi and Downtown Honolulu, affect the quality of life for residents and likely have a negative impact on tourism, the State's number one industry."

Councilmember Cachola said that skate park developers and traffic calming consultants normally make presentations to communities where such projects are planned for.

(more)

Cachola Calls For Synagro Study
September 8, 2003
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"These projects range from \$400,000 to just under \$1 million, but Synagro has a \$34 million project in which they never fully informed the Council, the community or the area councilmember about the project," he said. "On top of that, they have already signed the contract."

Councilmember Cachola will work with Synagro, community organizations and businesses to ensure that affected groups will be able to give their input. So far, the following community meetings are scheduled for this week:

1. Kalihi-Palama Community Council. September 8, 7 pm at Susannah Wesley Community Center, 1117 Kaili Street.
2. Kalihi Business Association—September 10, 2003, 12 noon at Honolulu Country Club, 1690 Ala Puumalu Street.
3. Kalihi Valley Neighborhood Board—September 10, 7 pm at Kalihi Valley District Park, 1911 Kamehameha IV Road.

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DUNG FLUNG IN BRONX SILO BLAST

By JOE MCGURK

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September 5, 2003 — A huge silo filled with treated human feces for use as fertilizer exploded early yesterday, sending an unpleasant wave of burnt fecal odor into the Hunts Point section of The Bronx.

Officials at the New York Organic Fertilizer Company said the silo, which held about 650 tons of dried fertilizer pellets, exploded at around 6:30 a.m. after a computer indicated one of the tanks was overheating.

Workers rushed to empty the silo, but pellet dust ignited inside the tank, causing what witnesses described as a huge explosion.

No one was injured, but the silo was substantially damaged, officials said.

"The odor is a nuisance, and until the cleanup process is complete, that will stay in the air," said company spokeswoman Lisa Alvarado, adding that there were no safety, environmental or health risks.

Residents in the mostly industrial neighborhood complained of an acrid, burning fertilizer smell.

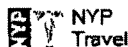
"It was a really big blast," said Ben Weiss, who works at a produce market half a block away. "It was a loud explosion, and then the smell. I've never smelled that before."

Officials said the company contracts with the city to transform material from New York's waste-water treatment plants into dried pellets which are then sold to farmers as fertilizer. The company had eight silos.

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